

Message Text

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ORIGIN IO-10

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DRAFTED BY IO/UNP:PWKRIEBEL:MR

APPROVED BY IO:ROBLAKE

EA/K:DO'DONOHUE (DRAFT)

L/UNA: RSTOWE (DRAFT)

DOD/J-5 COL.CARR

DOD/ISA:COL.WUBBENA

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 201606

INFORM CONSULS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UN, KS, KN

SUBJECT:BACKGROUND MATERIAL ON KOREAN ITEM IN THE UN

REF: (A) STATE 195240; (B) 195243

1. FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL MATERIAL MAY BE HELPFUL TO YOU
IN CONNECTION WITH DISCUSSIONS OF KOREAN ITEM WITH HOST
GOVERNMENT.

2. US FORCES IN KOREA. PRESENT NORTH KOREAN RESOLUTION
CALLS FOR WITHDRAWAL OF "ALL FOREIGN TROOPS UNDER THE UN
FLAG" FROM KOREA. THIS FORMULATION HAS BEEN USED FOR MANY
YEARS BY NORTH KOREA AND IT IS ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT THIS
PHRASE IS A EUPHEMISM FOR US TROOPS IN KOREA. THE
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EXPLANATORY MEMO ACCOMPANYING THE HOSTILE RESOLUTION STATES
IN PART, "ALL THE FACTS SHOW THAT NEITHER RELAXATION OF
TENSION NOR A DURABLE PEACE CAN BE EXPECTED IN KOREA SO
LONG AS THE PRESENT STATE OF ARMISTICE REMAINS AS IT IS

AND THE OCCUPATION OF SOUTH KOREA BY FOREIGN TROOPS CONTINUES." PYONGYANG RADIO IN A COMMENTARY ON THE RESOLUTION STATES, "IT IS IMPOSSIBLE EITHER TO GUARANTEE A DURABLE PEACE IN KOREA OR TO ACHIEVE THE INDEPENDENT AND PEACEFUL REUNIFICATION OF OUR COUNTRY SO LONG AS THE US TROOPS IN THE 'HELMETS OF UN FORCES' ARE KEPT IN SOUTH KOREA AS THEY ARE." IN ANOTHER PLACE

THE COMMENTARY STATES THAT THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSES, "BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE THE PROBLEM OF DISSOLVING THE UN COMMAND AND WITHDRAWING US TROOPS STATIONED IN SOUTH KOREA UNDER THE FLAG OF THE UNITED NATIONS." NO GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE UNDER ANY ILLUSION THEREFORE THAT SUPPORT FOR THIS RESOLUTION IS ANYTHING BUT SUPPORT FOR A DIRECT ATTACK ON THE PRESENCE OF US FORCES IN THE ROK.

AS PREVIOUS GUIDANCE HAS INDICATED, US FORCES IN KOREA ARE NOT UNDER THE OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF THE UN COMMAND. THIS CIRCUMSTANCE HAS BEEN OBSCURED OVER THE YEARS BECAUSE THE SAME AMERICAN OFFICER WHO COMMANDS THE US FORCES IN KOREA HAS ALSO ALWAYS BEEN COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE UN COMMAND. THE BASIS FOR THE PRESENCE OF US FORCES IN KOREA IS THE US/ROK MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY OF 1954. FROM 1950 TO 1954 US FORCES WERE IN KOREA IN RESPONSE TO THE 1950 UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION AS WELL AS INVITATION FROM THE ROKG TO SEND ASSISTANCE.

DURING THE KOREAN WAR 15 OTHER NATIONS CONTRIBUTED MILITARY FORCES AFTER THE NORTH'S INVASION. THESE FORCES, TOGETHER WITH THE ARMED FORCES OF THE ROK, WERE PLACED UNDER THE OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF THE UN COMMAND. AFTER THE 1953 ARMISTICE THIRD COUNTRY FORCES WERE GRADUALLY WITHDRAWN. NOW ONLY AN HONOR GUARD REMAINS WHICH NUMBERS LESS THAN FIFTY MEN PROVIDED BY THE UK, THAILAND AND THE PHILIPPINES. THESE ARE THE ONLY FOREIGN MILITARY PERSONNEL WHICH CAN REASONABLY BE CONFIDENTIAL

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CONSTRUED AS "FOREIGN TROOPS UNDER THE UN FLAG." THERE ARE IN ADDITION SOME 300 US STAFF PERSONNEL COMPRISING THE UN COMMAND ITSELF. THESE ARE NOT COMBAT TROOPS AND THEY SERVE IN TWO CAPACITIES, I.E. AS HEADQUARTERS US FORCES KOREA AS WELL AS HEADQUARTERS UNITED NATIONS COMMAND. NORTH KOREAN PROPAGANDA DOES NOT DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN SMALL NUMBER OF HEADQUARTERS PERSONNEL IN UN COMMAND AND US COMBAT ELEMENTS. FYI. TERMINATION OF THE UN COMMAND WOULD REQUIRE RENEGOTIATION OF THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF ROK FORCES. THIS IS UNDER DISCUSSION BETWEEN US AND ROK OFFICIALS NOW. END FYI.

2. UN FLAG. THE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION OF JULY 7,

1950 AUTHORIZED THE UNITED STATES TO ORGANIZE A UNIFIED COMMAND AND AUTHORIZED THIS COMMAND TO USE THE UN FLAG. FROM THEN UNTIL JUST RECENTLY THE UN FLAG HAS FLOWN AT ALL US/ROK MILITARY INSTALLATIONS PURSUANT TO THIS AUTHORIZATION BECAUSE MOST OF THE ROK ARMED FORCES HAVE REMAINED UNDER THE OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF THE UN COMMAND. SINCE THE OPENING OF BILATERAL TALKS BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA IN JUNE 1972, IT IS CLEAR THAT AN INCREASING NUMBER OF UN MEMBERS BELIEVE THAT THE KOREAN PROBLEM SHOULD BE SETTLED BY THE TWO PARTS OF KOREA. BECAUSE OF THE CHANGING SITUATION, WE AND THE ROK HAVE REACHED THE CONCLUSION THAT, HOWEVER SYMBOLIC AND HOWEVER JUSTIFIED THE FLYING OF THE UN FLAG IN THE PAST, IT IS NO LONGER APPROPRIATE EXCEPT AS IT INDICATES THE ESSENTIAL ROLE THE UN COMMAND STILL RETAINS IN RELATION TO THE MAINTENANCE OF THE ARMISTICE. THE US AND THE ROK HAVE ACCORDINGLY BEGUN THE PROCESS OF REDUCING THE PUBLIC MANIFESTATIONS OF THE UN COMMAND, INCLUDING USE OF THE UN FLAG, AS OUR LETTER OF JUNE 27 TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL INDICATED. THIS REDUCTION IS NOW VIRTUALLY COMPLETE AND THE UN FLAG FLIES ONLY AT THOSE INSTALLATIONS AND UNITS WHICH ARE DIRECTLY CONCERNED WITH THE PROTECTION OF THE DEMILITARIZED ZONE, IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ARMISTICE AGREEMENT AND UN COMMAND OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES. WE WILL SHORTLY SO NOTIFY THE UN. TERMINATION OF THE UN COMMAND WITH CONTINUATION OF THE ARMISTICE AGREEMENT AS PROPOSED IN OUR RESOLUTION
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WOULD LEAD TO TERMINATION OF EVEN THIS RESIDUAL USE OF THE UN FLAG.

4. WHILE ALL POSTS MAY DRAW ON ABOVE, WOULD APPRECIATE IF POSTS WHOSE HOST GOVERNMENTS COSPONSORED RESOLUTION WOULD REVIEW FOREGOING PARAS TO DETERMINE IF THERE IS MATERIAL WHICH MIGHT USEFULLY BE DISCUSSED IF THERE ARE INDICATIONS HOST GOVERNMENT NOT AWARE OF FULL IMPLICATION OF HOSTILE RESOLUTION REGARDING US TROOPS AND ARMISTICE AGREEMENT. INGERSOLL

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